WE CLAIM:

1.   A method of facilitating a transaction involving a target entity having software assets, comprising:

5   using a software analysis tool to extract information on the target entity's software assets; and

        performing at least one subsequent step in the transaction as a function of the extracted information.

10   2.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the information includes copyright information.

3.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the information includes software owner information.

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4.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the information includes third party software information.

5.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the

20   information includes programming language information.

6.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the information includes a high-level quality assessment of the software assets.

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7.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein using a software analysis tool comprises:

        providing software files to the software analysis tool; and

30   obtaining said information from the software analysis tool.

8.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the software files include source files.

9.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the software
5   files include object files.

10.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the information includes a list of entities having copyright in at least one of the software files.
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11.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the information includes a list of entities and the proportion of the software files in which each of said entities has copyright.
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12.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files in which no entity has copyright.

20   13.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files in which at least one entity has copyright.

14.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the
25   information includes a list of creators having created at least one of the software files.

15.   A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the information includes a list of creators and the
30   proportion of the software files created by each of said creators.

16. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files not specified as being created by any creator.

5   17. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files specified as being created by at least one creator.

18. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the
10 information includes a list of third party software vendors whose products are needed by at least one of the software files.

19. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the
15 information includes a list of third party software vendors whose operating systems are needed by at least one of the software files.

20. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the
20 information includes a list of third party software vendors whose software tools are needed by at least one of the software files.

21. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the
25 information includes a list of programming languages and the proportion of the software files programmed in each of said programming languages.

22. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the
30 information includes a list of file formats and the proportion of the software files in each of said file formats.

23. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein using a software analysis tool further comprises:

    running the software analysis tool on the software files.

24. A method of performing technical due diligence on a target entity having software assets, comprising:

    providing software files to a software analysis tool; and

    obtaining information on the target entity's software assets from the software analysis tool.

25. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the information includes copyright information.

26. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the information includes software owner information.

27. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the information includes third party software information.

28. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the information includes programming language information.

29. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the information includes a high-level quality assessment of the software assets.

30. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the software files include source files.

31. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the software files include object files.

32. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of entities having copyright in at least one of the software files.

33. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of entities and the proportion of the software files in which each of said entities has copyright.

34. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files in which no entity has copyright.

35. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files in which at least one entity has copyright.

36. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of creators having created at least one of the software files.

37. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of creators and the proportion of the software files created by each of said creators.

38. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files not specified as being created by any creator.

39. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes the proportion of the software files specified as being created by at least one creator.

40. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of third party software vendors whose products are needed by at least one of the software files.

41. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of third party software vendors whose operating systems are needed by at least one of the software files.

42. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of third party software vendors whose software tools are needed by at least one of the software files.

43. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of programming languages and the proportion of the software files programmed in each of said programming languages.

44. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the information includes a list of file formats and the proportion of the software files in each of said file formats.

45. A method as claimed in claim 29, further comprising:

running the software analysis tool on the software files.

46. A method of facilitating a transaction involving an expanding entity and a target entity having software assets, comprising:

a third party using a software analysis tool to extract information on the target entity's software assets;

the third party providing the extracted information to the expanding entity; and

the expanding entity performing at least one subsequent step in the transaction as a function of the information provided by the third party.

47. A method as claimed in claim 46, wherein the third party is contracted by the expanding entity.

48. A method as claimed in claim 46, wherein the third party is contracted by the target entity.